

**MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL**  
**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2017**  
**6:30 P. M.**

A regular meeting was held by City Council on Tuesday, February 14, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Bobby L. Davis presided. Council members Michael Baker, Ralph Atkinson, Ronald Atkinson, Odessa Gregg and Joseph Frazier were present. Councilman Emerson Hunt was not in attendance. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Clerk Lakesha Shannon and City Attorney Chris Elliott.

Mayor Bobby Davis called the meeting to order and Councilwoman Odessa Gregg gave the opening prayer. Mr. Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Davis welcomed citizens, guests and the press. (Hometown TV).

Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on January 10, 2017 and special meeting on January 24, 2017. The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

Mr. Brad Altman of the Marion Street Department was named *January Employee of the Month* and received a gift certificate. Mayor Davis thanked Mr. Altman for all his hard work in helping to keep our city great.

The Mayor's Monthly Beautification award was presented to Mr. Kevin Crawford. Mr. Crawford was not in attendance.

A resolution was presented to Mr. J. Wayne George honoring his retirement as South Carolina House Representative for District 57. The Mayor and Council members all stood with the family to present the resolution. Mr. George commented that he is honored to receive such a recognition. He noted that he has been elected to various bodies over the past 34 years, and he has always felt humbled by the opportunity to help others. He also commented that he is

grateful for the City of Marion and its elected officials for all the support provided to him over the years.

Mrs. Ellen Baldwin was not in attendance to present her request to Council regarding the Children's Outreach for Education Program. The City Clerk read a letter from Mrs. Baldwin thanking Council for all their support with youth programs in the community, and requesting assistance with funding or items to replenish the stock of school supplies that are donated to students in the community. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion that the request be taken under advisement to allow the City Administrator the opportunity to locate funding to support this endeavor; and report back to Council. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried. Councilwoman Odessa Gregg commented that she spoke with Mrs. Baldwin and encouraged her to continue to be the help that she has been to the students in this community. She stated that Mrs. Baldwin encourages supporters to buy the school supplies while they are on sale. A storage unit was donated to Mrs. Baldwin to store the supplies until she delivers them to the site for students. Mayor Davis added that Mrs. Baldwin has done a great job in helping the kids of this community and he will support her personally.

Mr. Al Blake was not in attendance to present his request to block off Main Street. Mr. Ammons explained that the request is to block off a section of Main Street following the upcoming RunFest and Chili Cook-off events to allow for entertainment at the Main Street Commons. Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion to approve the request from HMRA, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

Mr. Ammons stated that Council needs to set a date for the Annual City Party. Council agreed on the date of March 21, 2017 at 7:00pm at Woodhaven Restaurant.

Mr. Ammons presented the bid received for trackhoe repairs. He stated that about \$13,000 - \$14,000 was received from the sale of the old bulldozer. He recommended authorization to make the necessary repairs to the current trackhoe. He stated that bids were advertised and only one was received from Richardson Services of Conway for \$10,502.14.

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson asked if the broken windows had been repaired on the new bulldozer. Mr. Ammons confirmed that the windows have been repaired. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion that the bid from Richardson Services be accepted, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

Regarding the storm drain repairs, Mr. Ammons stated that this is a C-Fund Project that has been approved by the County Transportation Committee to replace the drainage line from East Liberty Street to Gregg Avenue. He recommended that Council consider the low bid of \$7,400 from Herrington Construction. Councilman Michael Baker motioned to accept the low bid, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Mr. Ammons presented the bids for repairs to the Grice's and Withlacoochee walking tracks. He stated that the repairs are needed due to storm damage and the project is eligible for up to 75% reimbursement by FEMA. Mr. Ammons recommended that the project be awarded to Herrington Construction for their low bid of \$7,400. Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson made a motion to accept the low bid from Herrington Construction, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

Mr. Ammons discussed the request to sale surplus police vehicles. He provided a list of police vehicles that are not being used. He recommended that the vehicles be listed for sale on [Govdeals.com](http://Govdeals.com), and the sale proceeds be designated back to the police department for vehicle maintenance expenses. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to sale the surplus vehicles and donate the proceeds to police vehicle repairs based on the memo received with the stipulation that the reserve minimal sale price be maintained. The motion was seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier, motion carried.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Ammons provided an update on the storm damage. He stated that the SCDOT contact will be back in the area on February 24th to pick up C&D items. They have also been notified of the tree stumps they previously missed. Councilman Ralph Atkinson commented

that he has observed numerous tree stalks still standing from damaged trees. He asked if the city could cut the stalks down and have them removed by FEMA to prevent costs to the city. Mr. Ammons stated that he contacted SCDOT regarding those trees and was told that at least 50% of the root would have to be pulled up from the ground to qualify for FEMA removal. He was provided the same information by a FEMA representative after taking him out to look at the trees. Mr. Ammons stated that Sanitation Supervisor Winkie Fore is currently going around town marking those trees with ribbons. He stated that a bid packet will be prepared and presented to Council to include removal costs. Councilman Joseph Frazier asked about a damaged tree that is located near his home. Mr. Ammons explained that the owner would be responsible for removal since it is located on private property. Mr. Ammons added that he has contacted several property owners to request removal of damaged trees from their property. Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson asked if FEMA would help with the damaged sidewalks. Mr. Ammons stated that he spoke with Mr. Harold Coleman from the highway department and they are working on a survey and will determine if they could prepare a bid to repair damage in the city that's on state right-of-ways.

Mr. Ammons stated that he along with Mayor Davis, Chief Tennie and the Police Captain met with a representative regarding the 1033 Program. This program will allow Chief Tennie to obtain items such as office furniture for the police department at no cost to the city. The only cost would be the annual registration fee. Mayor Davis added that the program also covers vehicles, weapons, first aid supplies, lawnmowers, and etc. Mayor Davis stated he, Chief Tennie and Mr. Ammons could go to the surplus area and select items that can be utilized by the city.

Mr. Ammons presented information regarding the \$52 million federal funding for Marion County recovery from Hurricane Matthew. He commented on a recent meeting held at the County Administration office to discuss the funding. He said it was explained that the funding would mainly cover housing. Mr. Ammons provided an email from Congressman Tom Rice requesting Council's presence at a Roundtable Discussion on February 23, 2017 regarding HUD Recovery funds for Marion County. They will also be setting up local centers where citizens can speak with representatives and complete paperwork for funding. Mayor Davis commented that

County Council submitted a letter to Congressman Rice requesting that Marion County use some of the \$52 million to help those other than low-income housing residents who need assistance. Mr. Ammons commented that most of the storm damage was in Marion County and the City of Marion needs infrastructure repairs. He said it was mentioned in the meeting that some of the money could also be used to fix roads and ditches. Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson stated that he attended the meeting as well and his understanding was that most of the funding had already been spoken for. Mayor Davis commented that the city really needs funding to fix the roads and he feels that the proposed 10% gasoline increase would help.

Mr. Ammons stated that the city will be applying for a \$50,000 USDA grant to purchase a fire truck. The City Attorney has prepared a letter requested by USDA that would authorize the Mayor to proceed with the grant application and sign all necessary documents. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to allow Mayor Davis to proceed in applying for the USDA grant, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

#### **CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE**

City Attorney Chris Elliott had no update at this time.

#### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

Mayor Davis stated that Departmental Reports were included in the Council's packets.

#### **DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FOR COUNCIL AND MAYOR**

Councilwoman Odessa Gregg commented on the monthly Victim's Advocate report. She stated that there were no incidents in several categories and it appears that the city is doing well and making progress.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson had no comment at this time.

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson commented that there is a pile of debris located on the grounds of the public library facing Godbold Street. He stated that he is unsure if the property belongs to the city or the county; however, the area looks bad and needs to be addressed. Mr.

Ammons stated that the property belongs to the county and he will speak with County Administrator Tim Harper. He added that the city will clean it up if needed.

Councilman Joseph Frazier thanked the Mayor for hosting the movie *War Room* at the Opera House on February 4th. He stated that he was very disappointed with the turnout and feels the event was not advertised properly. He asked that future events be advertised on the radio and in the newspaper so that citizens are aware of what the city is doing. Councilman Frazier also commented on a recent situation in which the city credit card was declined when Mayor Davis tried to pay for hotel accommodations while attending a Municipal Association meeting. Mayor Davis commented that it was a matter of miscommunication. City Treasurer Patricia Brown explained that the credit card payment was made on time. There was an error by the bank in which they applied the payment to an account for Marion, NC rather Marion, SC.

Councilman Michael Baker had no comments at this time.

Mayor Davis commented that the police department has experienced some break-ins and other incidents throughout the city. He stated that they are doing a great job in solving these crimes as highlighted in the newspaper. He stated that preventative measures, such as the police substation on Jones Avenue, has helped cut down on a lot of crime. Mayor Davis also provided an update on topics discussed during the recent Municipal Association's Board Meeting. He explained house bills H3650 and H3651 which pertain to city business licensing. He stated that Council needs to contact the local Senator, House Representatives and the Chamber of Commerce to express concerns regarding the local effects of these bills being approved. He also commented on a discussion regarding funding that was given back to municipalities through grants from the Municipal Association. Mayor Davis thanked those who came out to support the movie *War Room*. He also commented on a group of local youth who have taken on the role of Youth Council for the city. The group is working on ideas for movies they would like to show for the community.

Mr. James Norman from the Housing Authority Committee stated that everything is going well.

Ms. Dolly Watts with the Neighborhood Watch Group commented that their recent monthly meeting was one of the best ever. She stated that a lot of information was provided by the members. Mayor Davis thanked Ms. Watts for the great job the group does to help the city. He also commented that he hopes the city is able to establish an additional neighborhood watch team.

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel matters regarding the Fire and Police Departments, and legal matters. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried. Upon returning from Executive Session, Mayor Davis stated that no action was taken. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to return to open session, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

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Mayor Bobby L. Davis

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City Clerk Lakesha Y. Shannon

Taped: February 14, 2017